

UKRAINE'S TRADE UNIONS IN THE PUBLIC EYES



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What does the contemporary trade union movement in Ukraine look like? How do citizens assess its state and prospects? Do Ukraine's trade unions enjoy support and trust of the nation? What are the role and place of trade unions in society?

In order to clear up the attitude of the population to the contemporary Ukraine's trade union movement, Sociological Service of Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies named after Olexander Razumkov between 12 - 26 June, 2001, held an all-Ukrainian poll that involved 2,014 respondents aged above 18 years.

In our opinion, not only the general assessments of Ukraine's citizens¹ but also regional differences (touched upon in this article) are of substantial significance in understanding these issues.

THE SOCIOLOGICAL PORTRAIT OF UKRAINE'S TRADE UNIONS: EN FACE AND PROFILE

Let us try to draw the overall picture of the trade union movement by some basic socio-demographic characteristics of Ukraine's trade union members.

To begin with, the question "Are you a trade union member?" received 32.2% positive response. That is, a third of the adult population in the country has a connection to trade unions.

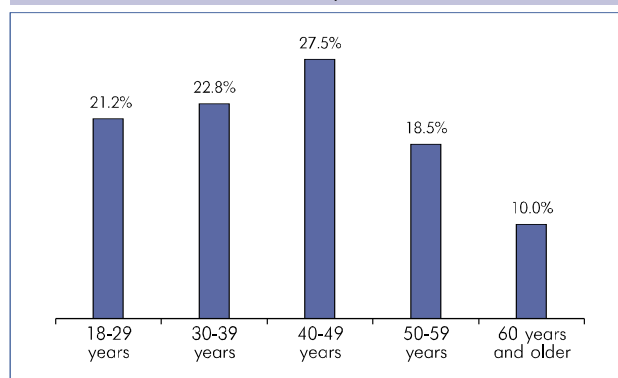
At the same time, 66.5% of respondents working in a collective called themselves trade union members. This indicator significantly varies by regions². In particular, the share of trade union members among workers is significantly lower in the West — 58.1% and in the North — 55% of the country. In other regions, their share is higher: in the Crimea — 68.4%, in the Centre — 63.3%, in the East — 67.8%, in the South — 64.1%, in Kyiv — 67.3%.

Sex. Among trade union members, women make up a somewhat larger share — 54.1%, than men — 45.9%. The difference between the percentage of trade union members among working men and women is far greater: 57.4% of working men and 70.5% (!) of women are trade union members. (*It should be noted, however, that men were more motivated by the need to fight for their rights in joining a union: 20.8% of male trade union members cited this reason, against 17.2% of female. Women are more traditionally motivated: when asked about the motives for their trade union membership, 45.7% said that they had been*

union members since the Soviet times, while among male trade union members, this motive was cited by 38.9%.

Age. The overall demographic structure of trade union membership looks balanced, by the criterion of age (Diagram "Age structure of the trade union membership").

Age structure of the trade union membership,
% of the polled



It is clear that **the core of the trade union movement is formed by representatives of 'mature', socially active age groups of 30-49 years who make up 50.3%** of all trade union members. One fifth (21.2%) of trade union members is made up by young people aged 18-29 years. *The data of the trade union membership among different age groups also arouse interest. Trade union members*

¹ Some results of the poll are presented in UCEPS Analytical Report published in this issue of the magazine.

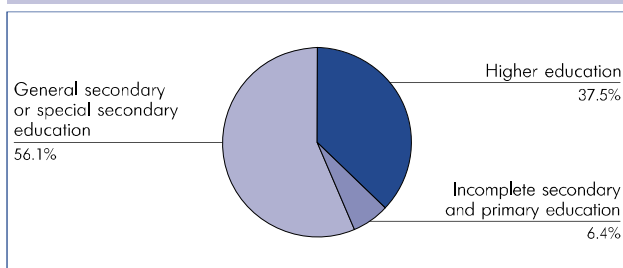
² Hereinafter, Ukraine's regions are grouped as follows: the Autonomous Republic of Crimea; the city of Kyiv; the Centre — the Vinnytsia, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Khmelnytskyi and Cherkasy regions; the West — the Volyn, Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil and Chernivtsi regions; the East — the Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, Luhansk and Kharkiv regions; the South — the Mykolayiv, Odesa and Kherson regions; the North — the Zhytomyr, Sumy and Chernihiv regions.

make up 79% of working people of 50-59 years and 70% of those between 40-49 years. Among working people of other age groups, the share of trade union members is also significant: 30-39 years — 64.9%, 18-29 years — 51.6%, above 60 years — 55.9%.

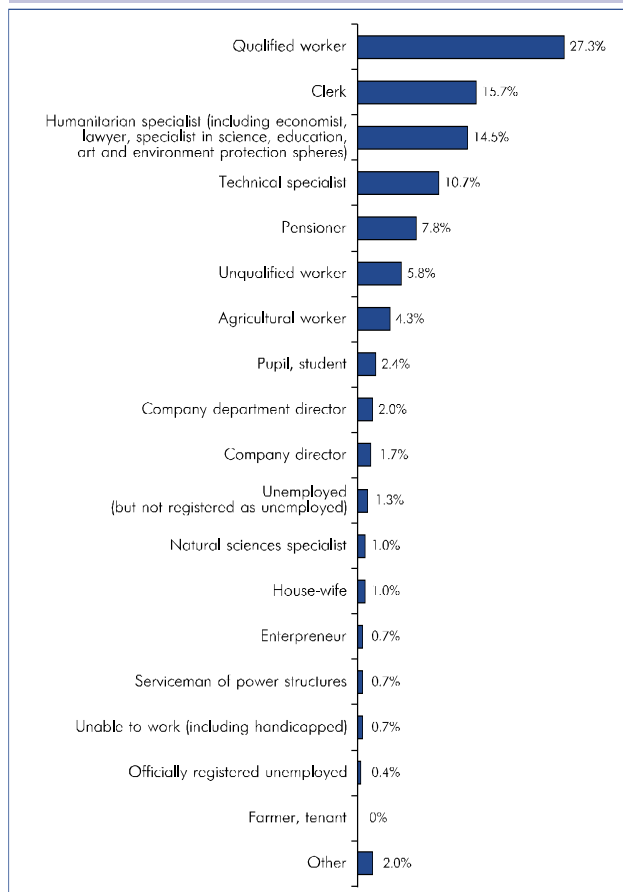
It should be noted here that almost four fifths of trade union members joined unions in Soviet times, which cannot but impact their motivation for the trade union membership (this phenomenon is discussed in more detail below).

Education. More than half of trade union members (56.1%) have a general secondary or special secondary education. At the same time, more than a third (37.5%) of trade union members have a higher education. The share of people with incomplete secondary and primary education is insignificant — just 6.4% (Diagram “*Educational structure of the trade union membership*”). We have not

Educational structure of the trade union membership,
% of the polled



Social structure of the trade union membership,
% of the polled



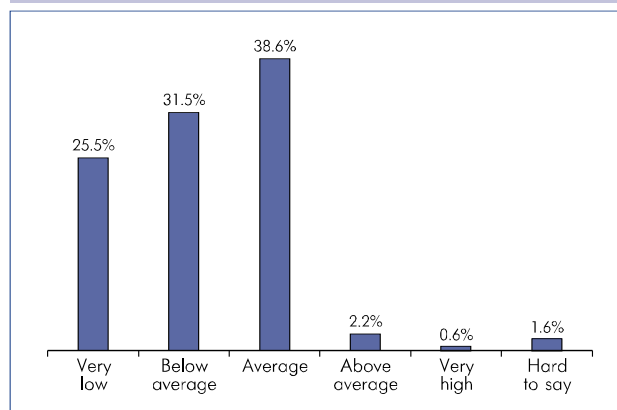
found any clear correlation between the educational level and motivation for the trade union membership.

Social status. The largest share of trade union members is made up by representatives of the following social groups: qualified workers (27.3%), clerks (15.7%), humanitarian specialists (14.5%), technical specialists (10.7%). A more complete list is presented in the Diagram “*Social structure of the trade union membership*”.

On the other hand, the share of trade union members is the greatest among the following social groups: enterprise managers (82.4%), humanitarian specialists (78.5%), technical specialists (75.8%). The share of trade union members is also high among qualified workers (68.2%), clerks (66.3%), company managers (63.2%), agricultural workers (54.5%), unqualified workers (51.9%), and natural scientists (46.7%). The share of trade union members is insignificant among representatives of military and law-enforcement structures (21.7%), students (16%), and businessmen (8.6%), and there was not a single trade union member among farmers polled.

Incomes. Given the socio-economic situation in the country, more than half (57%) of trade union members termed their incomes as very low (25.5%) or below average (31.5%); 38.6% has average incomes. The highly paid make up only 2.8% of trade union members (Diagram “*Income structure of the trade union membership*”).

Income structure of the trade union membership,
% of the polled

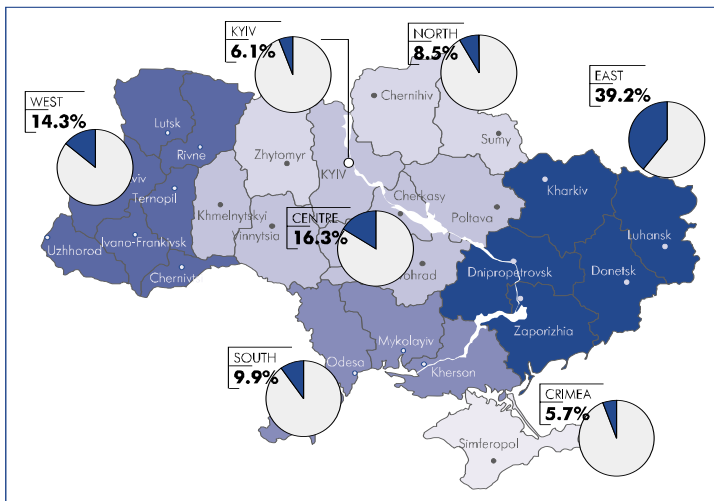


No clear correlation between the level of incomes and the reasons for acquiring the trade union membership has been observed.

Trade union geography. It can be stated that Ukraine's trade union movement is largely concentrated in the densely populated industrial East of the country (Chart “*Regional distribution of the trade union membership*” on the following page).

Hence, the general sociological portrait of Ukraine's trade unions is characterised by the following traits. Female trade union members are in the majority (although unemployment among women is much higher than among men). Half of all trade union members is people between 30-49 years. More than a third of trade union members has a higher education, so trade unions have accumulated a substantial intellectual potential. By social status, trade unions are overwhelmed with qualified workers, employees, humanitarian and technical specialists. More than half of all trade union members are residents of the East and the Centre of Ukraine.

**Regional distribution of the trade union membership,
% of the polled**



THE TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP: AN OLD-FASHIONED TRADITION OR A DELIBERATE CHOICE?

It is interesting that almost half (43.7%) of trade union members cited their being trade union members since Soviet times as the reason for continued membership. Naturally, the share of trade union members motivated by the Soviet experience is especially high among people of 40-49 years (58.6%) and 50-59 years (58.9%). The same reason was stated by half of working trade union members (50%) aged 60 and above. So, custom is a rather widespread motivation for the trade union membership. A somewhat smaller share of those is in the 30-39 years age group (39.4%), and very few — among people below 30 years: only 9%. The evident reason is that in younger age groups, the share of those who were members of Soviet trade unions is lower.

20.2% of trade union members cited as the reason for their membership the fact that it was 'customary' at their enterprise. The greatest part of them is among workers of 18-29 years (40.3%). Such motivation for the trade union membership is also strong in the 30-39 years age group — 27.1%. Far less of these may be found among older workers: 10.5% in each of the groups of 40-49 and 50-59 years, 11.5% — among trade union members aged 60 and above.

12.2% of trade union members noted that nobody asked their consent to join the trade union, as their union was established in a centralised manner. Their share is the highest in younger age groups: 18-29 years — 21.5%, 30-39 years — 16.1%; while among workers of 40-49 years, they make up only 6.6%; 7.3% — in the 50-59 years age group and 11.5% — among trade union members aged above 60 years.

Only close to 20% of trade union members made a deliberate choice when joining the union. Quite naturally, elder trade union members (60 years and above) the most frequently in all age groups stated that the trade union membership is necessary to defend their rights

(26.9%). The second largest share here was recorded among trade union members below 30 years (20.8%). This looks natural, since elderly people and the youth are the most vulnerable in labour relations. A bit more than 18% noted their deliberate choice of trade union membership in the age groups of 40-49 (18.2%) and 50-59 years (18.5%); in the 30-39-year group they made up only 14.8%.

It should be added that **only 71.3% of trade union members applied for admission in writing, and some 72.8% has a membership card.** This means that more than a quarter of all trade union members did not demonstrate a great desire to join the union and have no formal evidence of their membership. It can be added that **85.5% of trade union members has membership fees automatically deducted from wages, while 8.5% does not pay fees at all.** This completes the picture of the formal attitude towards the trade union membership.

FIRST OF ALL, TRADE UNIONS MUST... BUT...

People believe that **trade unions must**, first of all, **fight for a wage increase at least to the subsistence level** — this idea is shared by 57.2% of the polled. Such answers are not unexpected. To be sure, trade unions should not sit on their hands when a man working an entire working week does not obtain enough to sustain himself and his family, to say the least. Unfortunately, such a situation is not rare in the country, so, it is no wonder that **the majority of people (69.5%) is extremely dissatisfied with the trade union activity in this domain**³.

It should be noted that **this problem is especially acute for residents of the northern regions**, where 69.9% of respondents believes the struggle for a wage increase to be the primary task of trade unions. In other areas, there are far less such people: in the South — 60.5%, in the Crimea — 59%, in the East — 58.2%, in the Centre — 54.2%, in the West — 53.9%. The smallest share of respondents who mentioned this problem is in Kyiv — 47.2%.

In people's eyes, the second important task of trade unions is **the struggle against wage arrears**. More than half of respondents — 52.5% — believes this problem to be the most important assignment of trade unions, along with the previous one. **The importance attached to this assignment differs greatly by region.** For instance, it is considered to be a priority in the trade union activity by only 23% of the Crimeans but by as many as 75% of residents of the Southern region. In Kyiv, this view is shared by 45.7% of respondents, in the North — 47%, in the Centre — 47.8%. In the West, this indicator was 52%, in the East — 55.6%.

People do not believe that trade unions are successfully coping with the problem of wage arrears. **Almost two thirds of respondents (73%) assessed their activity in this domain as unsatisfactory**⁴.

Given all the above, it is possible to draw a serious reason why people are not very enthusiastic about trade

³ On a five-point scale. The aggregate of '1' and '2' marks.

⁴ Ibid.

unions: the latter do their worst while Ukrainians expect the best from them.

Other public expectations from trade unions have gone unmet as well. They are expected to: **fight unemployment (38.8%) and concealed unemployment (36.3%), defend the rights of people dismissed as a result of staff reduction or enterprise bankruptcy (33.2%), see to the observance of labour safety rules (19.4%), and defend the rights of hired workers at privatisation of once public property and land in Ukraine (11.2%).**

The marks given by people to trade unions for their activity in those domains are unlikely to please trade unions. The highest mark was given for the observance of labour safety requirement, although they are far from excellent, too: '1' — 25.2%, '2' — 17.9%, '3' — 30.2%, '4' — 11.3%, '5' — 3.1%. The rest of the areas were graded still worse — 'ones' and 'twos' were given in the vast majority of cases.

PEOPLE - TRADE UNIONS: THE LEVEL OF TRUST

Given the above assessment of the trade union activity by the public, it is no wonder that **the level of public trust in trade unions is rather low.** Only 7.6% of respondents entirely trusts trade unions (Diagram "Level of public trust in trade unions"). **More than half (51.7%) of those polled tends not to trust trade unions or does not trust them completely.** At that, the level of trust varies somewhat by region (Table "Level of public trust in trade unions, by regions"). For instance, in the Crimea, 44% of respondents completely trusts or is inclined to trust

trade unions; another 44% of the polled completely distrusts or is inclined to distrust them. In the East, trade unions enjoy far less confidence. Only 26.2% entirely trusts or is inclined to trust trade unions, while 60.9% completely distrusts or is inclined to distrust them. The greatest share of those who entirely trust trade unions was recorded in Kyiv — 13.3%.

Additional evidence of the low level of trust in trade unions is presented by answers to the question as to whom citizens would turn to first in the event of infringement on their labour rights. In the first place, we note that a third (33%) of respondents would turn to no one, including trade unions. This fact speaks for itself, since it means that every third Ukrainian is ready to suffer the arbitrariness of his employer or illegitimate dismissal rather than search for truth somewhere. Among the rest of the polled, however, few people would turn to trade unions in such a case. A quarter of respondents (26.6%) would go to court, 15.4% — to local authorities, and **only one in ten (9.7%) — to trade unions.** A question arises: if even in a situation where trade unions must come for assistance without a special request people intend to turn to authorities, not to the union, wherefore the need for such trade unions?

People themselves estimated the degree of the trade union defence of hired workers' interests. **More than half of respondents gave unsatisfactory marks: '1' and '2' — 54.7%. 22.6% of the polled put a satisfactory mark ('3'), and only one in nine gave high marks: '4' — 8.6%, '5' — 2.7%.**

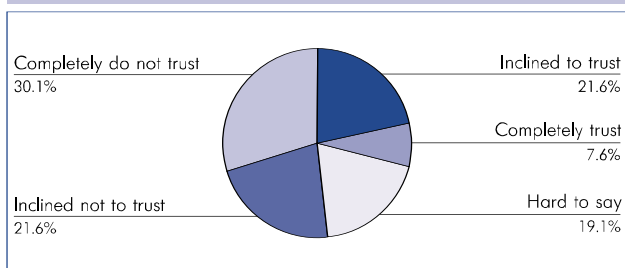
Trust in trade unions is also undermined by the incomprehensibility of their financial activity. The majority of trade union members (51.9%) does not know what their trade union fees are spent on⁵. Three quarters of the country's population (75.3%) are unaware of the destiny of social security funds made up of enterprise contributions paid for every worker, and only 15.3% knows where these monies go. Hence, the overwhelming majority of citizens (90.4%) is sure that trade unions should publish annual financial reports on their activity, and only 3.6% — considers this inappropriate.

IS THE BEST POLICY BEING BEYOND POLITICS?

The overwhelming majority of the polled believes that **trade unions should participate in the legislative process.** For instance, 38.5% is sure that trade unions should take an active part in the development of laws dealing with social and labour relations; 34.8% of respondents even believes that such laws should be taken only with trade union consent. Another 11% of the polled believes that trade unions should be consulted at preparation of such laws. Only one in twenty (5.2%) suggests that trade unions should not take part in legislative activity.

Meanwhile, respondent views as to the party and political activity of trade unions are strikingly different. **Only 15.3% of the polled believes that trade unions should support those political forces that raise the slogans**

**Level of public trust in trade unions,
% of the polled**



**Level of public trust in trade unions, by regions,
% of the polled**

	Completely trust	Inclined to trust	Inclined not to trust	Completely do not trust	Hard to say
Crimea	3.0%	41.0%	32.0%	12.0%	12.0%
Centre	8.4%	18.8%	14.7%	34.3%	23.8%
West	7.5%	22.1%	14.4%	30.4%	25.6%
East	6.4%	19.8%	24.0%	36.9%	12.9%
South	6.5%	22.9%	33.8%	19.4%	17.4%
North	10.8%	20.5%	21.1%	21.7%	25.9%
Kyiv	13.3%	21.9%	24.8%	22.9%	17.1%

⁵ This is known by 35.3% of those polled; 12.8% of trade union members could not answer this question.

of social protection of hired workers. Still less (8.6%) people believe it appropriate to create a trade union political party. The overwhelming majority of respondents (61.2%) is sure that trade unions should deal only with social and labour relations, maintaining a dialogue with the state and employers.

Regional differences of the population as to the participation of trade unions in political processes seem interesting. The overwhelming majority of the Crimeans (79%) and the Kyivites (73.1%) suggests that trade unions should be politically neutral and care only about social and labour relations, maintaining a dialogue with the state. The picture in the Centre and in the East is very much the same. Meanwhile, in the country's North, adherents of political neutrality by trade unions are far fewer — only 45.8% (Table “*What stance should trade unions take in relations between Ukraine's citizens and the authorities?*”).

At the same time, in three parts of the country — the West, the South and the North — a large share of the population (30.1%, 30.3% and 27.1%, respectively) stands for an active political position by trade unions. In their view, trade unions should either support certain political forces that put forward slogans of social protection of hired workers, or create a political party for participation in the next general elections.

For the majority of people, the trade unions activity in the field of labour relations, for which they are designed, is the most important. On that background, the West, the North and the South should be distinguished, where almost a third of the population is convinced of the necessity for the trade union involvement in politics.

TO STRIKE OR NOT TO STRIKE?

We should separately mention strikes as one of the most radical and controversial methods practised by

trade unions all over the world. The attitude of Ukraine's society to this phenomenon is contradictory, although people by and large are tolerant of strikes and strikers. **More than half of those polled (54.4%) is sure that all citizens of Ukraine should have the right to strike for economic reasons;** 29.9% — that the right to strike should be denied only to those categories of workers whose strike may endanger the life and safety of other people. Only 6.3% of those polled suggests that strikes should be prohibited in Ukraine. Another telling fact is that a quarter of respondents (24.9%) is ready to materially support strikers in their sector, 18.4% — in other sectors. These figures may seem low. It should be taken into account, however, that these people are ready to share their last pennies even in the present difficult economic situation, which is indicative of something, after all.

Answers concerning the right to strike greatly vary by region. **The Crimeans are the staunchest advocates of this right:** there, 72% of the polled believes that all citizens of Ukraine should be entitled to strike on economic grounds, **while in the South only 38.8% of those polled agrees with this** (Table “*Should Ukraine's citizens have the right to strike for economic reasons?*”).

The situation with the readiness to support strikers is very much the same. 35% of the Crimeans is ready to materially support strikers in their sector, 39% — in other sectors. A slightly lower readiness was demonstrated by the Kyivites: 25.7% is ready to support strikers in their sector, 22.9% — in other sectors. The Centre views the problem in the same way as Kyiv: there, the same share of citizens (25.7%) is ready to materially support strikers in their sector, 21.3% — in other sectors. In other regions, striking colleagues would be materially supported: in the West — by 28.9%, in the East — 25.1%, in the North — 19.3%, in the South — by 13.9%. Strikes of other sectors would

What stance should trade unions take in relations between Ukraine's citizens and the authorities?
% of the polled

	Crimea	Centre	West	East	South	North	Kyiv
Trade unions should deal only with social and labour relations maintaining a dialogue with the state and employers	79.0%	54.6%	57.9%	67.7%	55.7%	45.8%	73.1%
Trade unions should support political forces that proclaim slogans of protection of hired workers	5.0%	17.1%	18.4%	13.2%	19.9%	17.5%	8.7%
Trade unions should create a political party that will take part in the 2002 parliamentary elections	6.0%	9.7%	11.7%	6.3%	10.4%	9.6%	4.8%
Hard to say	10.0%	18.6%	12.0%	12.8%	14.0%	27.1%	13.4%

Should Ukraine's citizens have the right to strike for economic reasons,
% of the polled

	Crimea	Centre	West	East	South	North	Kyiv
The citizens of Ukraine should be entitled to strike for economic reasons	72.0%	49.0%	54.4%	60.4%	38.8%	48.5%	57.5%
The citizens of Ukraine should have the right to strike, with the exception of those categories of workers whose strike may endanger the life and safety of other people	18.0%	31.2%	34.7%	28.8%	33.8%	32.7%	16.0%
The citizens of Ukraine should not be entitled to strike and should resolve their problems by other means	4.0%	5.8%	4.8%	4.9%	13.9%	5.5%	10.4%
Hard to say	6.0%	14.0%	6.1%	5.9%	13.5%	13.3%	16.1%



be supported: in the West — by 19.2% of the polled, in the East — 16.4%, in the North — 11.4%, in the South — by 10.9% of respondents.

42.3% of those polled views strikes as an effective method of struggle, 37.5% — as ineffective. Every fifth respondent (20.2%) could not give a definite answer⁶.

It is striking that, by many indicators, the Crimeans have a distinct opinion. This is especially striking when the assessments of the Crimeans are diametrically opposite to those of respondents from the neighbouring South. For instance, the fight against wage arrears is considered to be a primary mission of trade unions by 75% of those polled in the South — and only 23% of the Crimeans; meanwhile, 40.8% of the Crimeans and only 8.9% of the Southerners positively assessed the activity of the trade union committees; the universal right to strike is advocated by 72% of the Crimeans — and 38.8% of residents polled in the southern regions; finally, political activity of trade unions is viewed as expedient by 45.8% of the Crimeans — and 75% of Southerners. Such discrepancies are not accidental, they require separate study; in particular, they point to the fact that residents of the Crimea and the South view the functions of trade unions and political parties differently.

TRADE UNIONS AT ENTERPRISES

More than a third (36.9%) of those polled, who work in collectives, confirmed the existence of a trade union committee at their enterprise (institution, organisation), but said that its work was not evident; 21.7% — reported that a trade union committee was active at their enterprise and its every member diligently performed assigned functions; 20.8% — suggested that although their trade union committee does something, only its chairman works properly; 20.5% of those polled stated that there was no trade union committee at their enterprise.

It is noteworthy that the assessment of the trade union committees as properly working largely depends on the region. **The trade union committees were most highly praised in the Crimea**, where 40.4% of those polled is sure that at their enterprises, the trade union committees not only exist but that every member diligently performs assigned functions. Such answers are rare in the South — only 8.9%. In other regions, this

view was maintained: in the Centre — by 21.1%, in the West — 18.6%, in the East — 21.8%, in the North — 24%, and in Kyiv — by 33.3% of the polled.

It should be added that 43.2% of trade union members could not name trade union association of their union. Here, members of FTUU member unions were the best informed — 25.5%.

The insufficient activity of trade unions on the enterprise level is proven by the situation with collective agreements between unions and employers. Half (50.4%) of those polled working in collectives does not even know whether there is an agreement between the trade union and employer at their enterprise. Less than a quarter (23.1%) of polled enterprise workers stated that there was such an agreement at their enterprise, and that its provisions were being fulfilled; 13.6% — reported that there was such an agreement at their enterprise, but its provisions were not being observed, while another 12.9% — stated that there was no collective agreement whatsoever.

DOES UKRAINE NEED TRADE UNIONS?

Only 16.7% of respondents termed the present state of trade unions as a process of establishment of the trade union movement, while the vast majority of those polled (79.3%) is sure that Ukraine's trade union movement is in a critical state. Only 4% of Ukrainians shares the view that the trade union movement is on the rise.

It is interesting to survey the regional distribution of assessments. **The greatest shares of respondents who called the present state of the trade union movement critical were among the Kyivites (84.9%) and the Crimeans (84.1%), somewhat smaller — in the West (73%) and in the North (74.5%).** The full results of the poll are presented in the Table *“Regional assessments of the present state of the trade union movement”*.

By contrast, **the (relatively) greater share of respondents who believe that the trade union movement is on the rise and has broad prospects is observed in the Centre (6.7%) and in the North (6.1%).** At the same time, **the West has the largest share of optimists convinced that the country is witnessing the process of establishment of a new type the trade union movement — 25.7%.** This is far more than in any other part of the country. **The least optimistic are the Crimeans — 11.9%.**

**Regional assessments of the present state of the trade union movement,
% of the polled**

	Crimea	Centre	West	East	South	North	Kyiv
The trade union movement is on the rise and has broad prospects	4.0%	6.7%	1.3%	3.9%	4.0%	6.1%	0.9%
The country is witnessing the process of establishment of a new type of the trade union movement	11.9%	14.3%	25.7%	13.5%	15.7%	19.4%	14.2%
The present state of the trade union movement is critical	84.1%	79.0%	73.0%	82.6%	80.3%	74.5%	84.9%

⁶ It is noteworthy that many of those who do not consider strikes to be an effective measure are motivated not by the social implications of strikes but by the cynical attitude of the authorities to such labour action: 46.3% of those respondents who consider strikes an ineffective way of struggle argues that “the authorities ignore all strikes anyway”. 12.8% of those polled is still more pessimistic about strikes: this group is sure that even if the employer or the authorities make concessions, in the future, they will resort to even tougher means of pressure on workers. The motive of 20.5% of those who do not consider strikes to be effective lies in economic damage caused by strikes to enterprises and economy as a whole. Another 17.2% — believes that in the conditions of a difficult economic situation and high unemployment rate, strikers may easily be replaced with other workers.

Public opinion is rather sceptical about the nearest future of trade unions. Almost half of Ukraine's adult population (47.9%) predicts that in the next several years, the role of all trade unions in society will remain insignificant. A quarter of respondents (25.3%) suggests that independent trade unions will make progress, a bit more (26.8%), on the contrary, attaches this role to trade unions closely interwoven with the authorities. The most sceptical in this respect were the Northerners: 56.2% of them believes that the role of any trade unions in society will remain insignificant. This view was shared by 52.9% of those polled in Kyiv, 51.7% — in the Centre, 51% — in the Crimea. Such respondents are less than half of all those polled in the East (48.1%) and the South (48.2%). **The least sceptical are the Westerners — 37.5%.**

The share of people convinced that Ukraine will witness the development of independent trade unions is the highest in the West (38.9%), and the lowest — in the Centre (18.9%). In other regions this indicator fluctuated between 21.6% — in the North and 26.9% — in Kyiv.

The greatest share of people convinced in the positive prospects of trade unions closely related with the authorities is in the East (29.5%) and the Centre (29.4%), the least — in Kyiv (20.2%) and in the North (22.2%). The same opinion was expressed by 24% of the Crimeans, 23.6% of the Westerners and 27.9% of those polled in the South.

Given such a dreary picture, a question arises: maybe Ukraine's society does not need trade unions? Ukrainians disagree with this — 81.7% of respondents believes that trade unions should exist in Ukraine, while the opposite opinion was maintained by only 6.7% of those polled.

Meanwhile, trade unions should not just exist but defend the interests of workers, and 88.5% of the polled is sure that trade unions should do this even if they have to enter into conflict with the authorities. Such views are especially spread in the Crimea (92.1%) and in the West (91.2%), somewhat less — in the North (84.9%).

Only 11.5% of respondents believes that trade unions should co-operate closely with the authorities and not enter into conflict with them under any circumstances. The share of such respondents is the lowest in the Crimea (7.9%) and in the West (8.8%), and the highest — in the North (15.1%).

HOW MANY TRADE UNIONS DOES UKRAINE NEED?

The attitude of Ukrainians towards the great number of trade unions and trade union associations established in Ukraine over the years of independence remains uncertain.

23.2% of respondents could not assess the presence of a great many trade unions and trade union associations in Ukraine. 20.9% of the polled sees this as a manifestation of democracy in Ukraine's society, 20.3% — as an evidence of creation of 'pocket' trade

unions for the needs of certain business groups. 18.8% of respondents explains this phenomenon by the personal ambitions of trade union leaders, 15.8% — views this as an evidence of weakness of the official trade union association that should have rallied all unions. It should be noted that in general, **Ukraine's population favours the centralisation of trade unions — 50.7%** of citizens believes that all unions should be managed in a centralised manner. 29.1% of those polled adheres to the opposite opinion.

Almost half of respondents (49%) believes that the state should recognise only officially registered trade unions, while 32.1% of those polled is sure that any public organisations on a professional basis should be recognised.

The results of the poll prove that the population is critical about trade unions. The majority of the polled believes that along the main directions, as they see it, such as wage increase, fight against wage arrears and unemployment, defence of rights of fired workers, the performance of Ukraine's trade unions is poor. More than half (57.7%) of the workers believes that the trade union committee at their enterprise is passive, or that only its Head discharges the trade union functions. At that, the trade union membership of almost half of those polled (43.7%) is of a formal nature, as a 'habit' that has remained from Soviet times.

Most probably, it is exactly these reasons that condition the low level of public trusts in trade unions: only 7.1% of respondents entirely trusts them.

The overwhelming majority (79.3%) of the country's population is sure that Ukraine's trade union movement is in a critical state, and only 16.7% of respondents sees this as a transitional creative process. Moreover, Ukraine's society is rather sceptical about the unions' future. Almost half (47.9%) of Ukraine's adult population predicts that for years, the social role of all trade unions will be insignificant.

Ukraine's citizens are rather sceptical about the political activity of trade unions. The overwhelming majority of respondents (61.2%) is sure that unions should care only about social and labour relations maintaining a dialogue with the state and employers; 15.3% of those polled believes that trade unions should support political forces that put forward slogans of social protection of hired workers; only 8.6% of citizens sees expedience in creating a trade union political party.

Despite the critical assessment of the present state of the trade union movement and its prospects, the overwhelming majority of the polled (81.7%) is convinced of the necessity of trade unions. People pin some of their hopes on trade unions. Hence, good prospects and public support rest with those trade unions that will effectively defend workers' rights and interests. It is precisely such trade unions that are in demand by Ukraine's society. ■